REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed September 11, 2008 in which claims 1-18 were pending and rejected. With this Amendment, claims 1-11, 14, 16, and 17 have been amended and claims 12 and 13 have been cancelled. Further, new claims 19-22 have been added. In view of the following, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Before responding to the substantive rejections in the Office Action, Applicant notes that claims 1-10 have been amended to recite "computer readable storage media." These amendments were not made in view of any prior art, but rather to place the claims in a preferred form for U.S. practice.

Independent claim 1 also has been amended to recite "when a response includes an answer to the prompt that was given and additional information that is not an answer to the prompt that was given, wherein an additional prompt is then provided to the user concerning the additional information before returning to the selected order." Further, independent claim 11 has been amended to recite "a plurality of semantic items that maintain information related to previous responses received from the user", "a response includes an answer to a prompt that was given and additional information that is not an answer to the prompt that was given", and "the module maintains an indication associated with the one or more semantic items that the dialog is to depart from the selected order to provide an additional prompt to the user concerning the additional information before the dialog returns to the selected order." Applicant notes that support for these amendments can be found in Applicant's specification, in one instance, at paragraph [238]-[240].

Further, additional amendments have been made to independent claims 1 and 11 to clarify the environment of the claimed subject matter. For instance, claim 1 has been amended to recite controls "configured for use on a server remote from the client... used to dynamically generate client side markup in accordance with the dialog" and a module "configured for use on the client."

Objections to the Specification

On page 2, the Office Action objected to the specification. In particular, the Office Action cited the terms "RL10" and "RL11" in claims 7 and 14, respectively, stating that there is no description of these terms in the disclosure. Applicant notes that inclusion of these terms in the claims was a clerical error and has herewith amended the claims accordingly. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

On page 2, claims 7 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Office Action cited the terms "RL10" and "RL11" in claims 7 and 14, respectively. As mentioned above, these claims have been amended to remove these terms. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under § 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-6 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Alpdemir (U.S. Patent Publ. No. 2002/0035474) in view of Albayrak et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,662,163 – hereinafter "Albayrak"). Claims 7-10 and 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Alpdemir in view of Albayrak and further in view of Takebayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,357,596 – hereinafter "Takebayashi").

Aspects described in the present application relate to focusing in a mixed-initiative dialogue (e.g., see paragraph [238]). For instance, a user may provide many pieces of information in a response. The information can include an answer(s) to a question or prompt as well as additional or extra answer(s). In one embodiment, the system includes a focusing mechanism to process the additional information and can depart from a selected ordering for the controls in the dialog (see e.g., paragragh [238]-[241]).

As amended, independent claim 1 recites "wherein the dialog follows the selected order of prompting and receiving input from a user as related to the order of the controls, and departs from the selected order as a function of responses from the user when at least one response includes an answer to the prompt that was given and additional information that is not

an answer to the prompt that was given, wherein an additional prompt is then provided to the user concerning the additional information before returning to the selected order."

The cited Alpdemir reference discloses a system for providing a voice-interactive marketplace. The system of Alpdemir provides telephone-based audio recognition allowing a user to interact with a merchant. A database includes the merchant information and voice commands can be used to retrieve information from the database. However, Alpdemir does not disclose providing controls or dialog functions for a mixed-initiative dialogue environment. For example, as described in the cited sections of Alpdemir (i.e., paragraphs [0143]-[0144], [0217], [0226]), the system of Alpdemir provides a method for a user to follow prompts during a business interaction. The system asks the user for registration information and determines whether a user is registered based on the information. This section does not teach or suggest handling "additional information" or departing from a selected order as claimed. Further, as described in paragraphs [0222] and [0223] the system provides a greeting message 382 and asks the user to make a selection regarding a category (step 408). As stated in Alpdemir, "once the consumer user says one of the menu items (Step 410), then he or she is prompted with a request message (Step 412)..." (emphasis added)(see paragraph [0222]). Thus, the user proceeds through the menu options in a desired manner by making selections in a defined fashion. The system of Alpdemir does not teach or suggest a response that includes an answer to the prompt that was given and additional information that is not an answer to the prompt that was given, wherein an additional prompt is then provided to the user concerning the additional information before returning to the selected order. Instead, Alpdemir discloses processing answers to the prompts at each step and does not disclose concepts related to handling additional answers as ckauned.

Moreover, the cited Albayrak discloses a speech recognition engine that converts voice responses form a user into a text response that is used to perform an action (see Abstract). Albayrak discloses managing voice dialog (see col. 3) and responding to requests for voice pages in accordance with a predefined protocol. However, Albayrak also fails to teach or suggest a response that includes an answer to the prompt that was given and additional information that is not an

<u>answer to the prompt that was given</u>, wherein an additional prompt is <u>then</u> provided to the user concerning the additional information be<u>fore returning to the selected order</u>. For at least these reasons, claim 1 is neither taught, suggested, nor rendered obvious by the cited references.

Amended independent claim 11 recites features including, among others, "a plurality of semantic items that maintain information related to previous responses received from the user, wherein at least one response includes an answer to a prompt that was given and additional information that is not an answer to the prompt that was given." As claimed, "the additional information is associated with one or more of the semantic items and the module maintains an indication associated with the one or more semantic items that the dialog is to depart from the selected order to provide an additional prompt to the user concerning the one or more semantic items before the dialog returns to the selected order." Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references at least do not teach or suggest, either separately or in combination, semantic items that maintain information related to previous responses or maintaining an indication associated with the one or more semantic items that the dialog is to depart from the selected order to provide an additional prompt as claimed. For at least these reasons, claim 11 is neither taught, suggested, nor rendered obvious by the cited references.

New independent claim 19 recites features including, among others, a module that "uses a plurality of semantic items to store information related to responses received from the user, wherein the module follows the selected order until a response is received from a user that includes additional information that is not an answer to a prompt that was given." As recited in claim 19 the module stores the additional information in one or more semantic items and creates an ordered list indicative of the semantic items having the additional information, wherein the module determines if any prompts should be provided to the user based on the order of the semantic items in the ordered list before returning to the selected order. The cited references at least do not teach or suggest semantic items, additional information, or departing from a selected order as claimed. For at least these reasons, claim 19 is neither taught, suggested, nor rendered obvious by the cited references.

In view of the foregoing where it has been shown that the cited references do not teach, suggest, nor render obvious the inventions recited in independent claims 1, 11 and 19, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims. Dependent claims 2-10, 14-18, and 20-22, depend directly of indirectly from one of claims 1, 11 and 19. It is believed each of these claims are separately patentable when the features recited in the dependent claim are combined with the features recited in the corresponding independent claim and any intervening claims. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application is requested.

The foregoing remarks are intended to assist the Office in examining the application and in the course of explanation may employ shortened or more specific or variant descriptions of some of the claim language. Such descriptions are not intended to limit the scope of the claims; the actual claim language should be considered in each case. Furthermore, the remarks are not to be considered exhaustive of the facets of the invention which are rendered patentable, being only examples of certain advantageous features and differences, which applicant's attorney chooses to mention at this time. For the foregoing reasons, applicant reserves the right to submit additional evidence showing the distinction between applicant's invention to be unobvious in view of the prior art.

Furthermore, in commenting on the references and in order to facilitate a better understanding of the differences that are expressed in the claims, certain details of distinction between the same and the present invention have been mentioned, even though such differences do not appear in all of the claims. It is not intended by mentioning any such unclaimed distinctions to create any implied limitations in the claims.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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